

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PANAMA 00465 242103Z

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2847

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 0465

S/S-O PASS FOLLOWING FM MINISTER BELL TO AMBASSADOR KOREN,
CHAIRMAN, PANAMA CANAL NEGOTIATION WORKING GROUP, DEPARTMENT OF
DEFENSE

FROM MINISTER BELL.

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PN, PFOR

SUBJ: U.S - PANAMA NEGOTIATIONS: SOFA AND LAND USE NEGOTIATIONS

1. THE PANAMANIANIS ARE PREPARED TO MEET IN WASHINGTON AT 9:00
AM ON MONDAY, JANUARY 28 AT AMBASSADOR GONZALEZ' RESIDENCE TO
PURSUE THE SOFA NEGOTIATION INTENSIVELY. AMBASSADOR BUNKER AND
THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAVE AGREED THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD
BE COMPLETED WITHIN TWO WEEKS AT A MAXIMUM.

2. WE ANTICIPATE THAT THE UNITED STATES TEAM WILL REMAIN THE
SAME EXCEPT THAT BELL HAS WITHDRAWN FROM ACTIPO, DAY-TO-DAY
PARTICIPATION IN ORDER TO TRY TO REDUCE SOMEWHAT THE LEVEL OF
PANAMANIAN NATIONALISTIC RHETORIC, AND THE PANAMANIANIS HAVE
ACQUIESCED. ACCORDINGLY, KOZAK WILL SPEAK FOR THE UNITED STATES
NEGOTIATORS ON THE TEAM.

3. THE PANAMANIAN TEAM WILL CONSIST OF AMBASSAODR GONZALEZ,
ROMULO ESCOBAR, ADOLFO AHUMADA, JAIME ARIAS, AND JORGE CARASCO
(INTERPRETER). IT REAMINS UNDERSTOOD, HOWEVER, THAT THE PRODUCT
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PAGE 02 PANAMA 00465 242103Z

OF THE SOFA NEGOTIATION WILL BE AD REFERENDUM TO THE DEPUTY

NEGOTIATORS, AND THAT THEY WILL ADDRESS ON A "POLITICAL LEVEL"
ANY SERIOUS NEGOTIATING IMPASSES WHICH MAY ARISE.

4. THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAS ACCEPTED THE UNITED STATES NEGOTIATORS' POSITION THAT VERY SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS TOWARD A MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY SOFA IS A PREREQUISITE TO MOVING SIGNIFICANTLY INTO THE LAND-USE NEGOTIATION.

5. THE AMBASSADOR HAS AGREED THAT THE TWO NEGOTIATIONS ARE IN FACT CLOSELY LINKED, AND THAT A UNITED STATES TEAM WILL BE PREPARED TO MEET A PANAMANIAN TEAM ON THE LAND-USE ISSUE IN WASHINGTON ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3, FOR "PRELIMINARY" DISCUSSION. THE AMBASSADOR WOULD HOPE THAT THE UNITED STATES TEAM WOULD CONSIST OF THE SUPPORT GROUP MEMBERS, BACKED UP BY REPRESENTATIVES FROM PAN CANAL AND SOUTHCOM. THE PANAMANIAN TEAM WILL BE HEADED BY EDWIN FABREGA AND COMPRISE THREE OR FOUR PERSONS IN TOTAL.
JORDEN

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